

**ABBOTT MEMORIAL LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES  
MAY 19, 2015 MEETING**

The meeting began at approximately 7:15 PM. Present: Anne Bower, Carole Brown, Betsy Rhodes, Betsy Siebeck, Tessa Westbrook, Cory Smith, Librarian, and Jean Souter, new trustee to be appointed as soon as possible.

Anne Bower opened the meeting by welcoming Jean Souter as a new member of the Board and thanked her for her willingness to fill the vacancy created by Emily Harrington's resignation. The Selectboard would have to appoint her, but until then Jeanne would sit in on the meeting for informational purposes, as a non-voting member. The agenda was then adopted and the minutes from the April 9<sup>th</sup> regular meeting were unanimously accepted. Betsy R. agreed to file the final minutes.

**REPORTS**

**Librarian:** Cory gave an update on Library activities and distributed the attached report. She reviewed and then explained the circulation statistics for April and went on to talk about recent and upcoming programs. She gave special thanks to Judi Green for supplying the Lego for the successful after school Lego program in which 17 boys enthusiastically participated. She also thanked Anne Bower and Sue Heston for helping with snacks. She then reported that 16 people attended the Stop the Invasive Plant Program and found Betsy Rhodes' presentation fun and informative. Plans for the Summer Reading Program were underway, and she and Carole agreed to meet to discuss the details. The State again would offer a free family day pass to Vermont State Parks and historic sites that Library patrons could check out and use during the summer; Billings Farm had done the same, donating a free day pass to the Farm. This summer, Cory also had signed up for the Passport to Vermont Libraries Program to encourage people to visit libraries around the State. Charlie Bollinger's Eagle Scout project plan, to work on the two Library property borders, had been submitted to his troop leaders. He had one year to complete the project but wanted to do most of it in the summer; Cory and Betsy R. worked to adapt the plan accordingly. Finally, she reported that she was working on the audio book order and would be reviewing year-end budget numbers with Betsy S.

**Buildings & Grounds:** Anne reported that the radon meter read four, which was a safe level, although it would better if the number were lower. The filters would continue to be changed and the level monitored. The front walkway was then discussed. It was agreed that raising the level of the walkway and carrying it out to Library Street were improvements, but addressing the drainage problem would be ongoing. The walk remained dry during heavy rains but water pooled on either end of the drainage pipe. Discussion followed. For the time being, those present agreed that the pipe should continue to be monitored and orange cones placed at the end of the walk to encourage people not to park in front of the walk, making entrance to the Library difficult. Betsy R. agreed to contact Pomfret Road Foreman Art Lewin to ask if cones were available from the Town for the Library to use.

**Treasurer:** Betsy S. distributed a year-to-date budget report. Discussion followed as the Board considered various line items, comparing actual numbers to budgeted amounts. Betsy S. reported a discrepancy that would be sorted out when final year-end numbers were available. Cory and Betsy S. agreed to meet to review a few line items. Speculation about increased phone and internet costs with ECFiber's arrival followed; more should be known over the summer. Betsy S. went on to report that the Library assets had not yet been entered in the Town's accounting system, so they would continue to be reported separately until that changed. Anne inquired about the status of the signature cards. Betsy S. reported that cards for Anne and Betsy R. were in the process of being made; the thought was that two other trustees, in addition to herself, should be given this authority, so the Board had some flexibility to make changes, if one of the authorized individuals were unavailable two others would be able to sign. Those present agreed that this was a good idea.

**Community Liaison:** Carole reported that she had conducted research concerning the Pomfret/Bridgewater school consolidation and the best way to outreach to the Bridgewater community. Since the last Board meeting, she had talked with Ted Brown, Bridgewater School's principal, who was extremely receptive to Abbott's community outreach. Carole wanted to be sure that outreach was not just to the students but to the adults in their lives as well. Discussion followed. It was determined that Carole should stay in touch with Ted Brown, and if an orientation for new students were to take place, Abbott would have some sort of presence, either through a presentation or the distribution of an informational pamphlet, which would be available both electronically and in hard copy; the Library also would try to participate at the back to school night at the beginning of the school year; Abbott would host a welcome to Pomfret event; and, Cory and Carole would be sure to distribute summer program fliers to not only the Pomfret School students but to those in Bridgewater as well.

**Development:** Anne described the role of the development person to date and thanked Tessa again for agreeing to take on the post. Essentially, it entailed the coordination of the year-end annual appeal. Anne reported that Jenny Satterfield had agreed to help, since she had done so much work on this process when she was on the Board. Discussion followed and other fundraising opportunities were considered, from work with Eric Werner at Morgan Stanley to helping with the Covered Bridge Half Marathon in exchange for a donation. Speaking of which, Anne recommended that those trustees who volunteer this year consider bringing bug spray, band aids and paper towels; she had found those items helpful in the past.

**Chair:** Anne reported that she had an upcoming meeting with Jenny Satterfield about creating a Library blog. Discussion followed. Due to the difficulty of making changes to the existing website, those present agreed a blog that could be easily updated would be useful; the website would only have general information that did not need to be changed. Anne asked for suggested language for the link to the blog. Everyone agreed that the link needed to be simple, clear and easy to use, such as a large button that would say something like “Click here for Library info & activities.” Finally, Anne reviewed the appointment process for a new trustee. She agreed to contact the Selectboard to ask them to please appoint Jeanne at their next regular meeting. Jeanne would then need to be sworn in by the Town Clerk before the next Board meeting in order to fully participate, which she agreed to do.

## OLD BUSINESS

**Roof Restoration project:** The big news Anne reported was that eight sample roof tiles in five boxes had been mailed off to Ohio for only \$139.59, because they were all going to one place and it was a business. Everyone was pleasantly surprised at the low cost and congratulated Anne on taking this huge step. The next monumental task was for the Board to vote on the project bid from Gerard Leone, which was the only one received after Anne publically posted and sent out the request to various people. Discussion followed. Although the bid was slightly higher than what he estimated last fall, Anne had already determined ways it might be cut, for example, re-using the finials instead of molding new ones at \$800 per mold; this would save roughly \$2,400, about the same amount that the estimate had increased. When asked, Anne said that she would be comfortable if we were able to raise \$10,000 more for the project. If the Dolan Foundation grant were awarded, we might receive as much as \$7,000. One way or another, an additional fundraising push would need to take place, but we were close to meeting our goal. Anne then discussed the timetable once the bid was approved, tiles were counted and Gerard started. Ideally, the new tiles would be received in August or September and installed in the early fall. If the tiles were late and/or Gerard was not available when they arrived, installing them might have to wait until the spring. To get started, the Board would need to approve the bid, so Anne asked the board to accept the bid. The bid was accepted unanimously. Anne reported that she would sign the bid, take it to Montpelier to her meeting with the State Historic Preservation Department for approval; then, they would draw up the official grant agreement, which everyone would sign, and the project could move forward. Everyone congratulated Anne on her incredible efforts and accomplishments.

**Question re: prioritizing Trustees’ Goals:** Anne explained that some of the goals currently listed were ongoing while others were time linked and had been on the list for a long time. Discussion followed. Those present agreed that the goals should be divided into two sections: “General Practices,” under which conduct of meetings, staff support, volunteers and grants would fall; and “Priority Goals,” which would include community outreach, records, collection cataloging, technology, artifacts and facilities. It was agreed that the goal relating to trustee workshops would be removed. Specific timelines for each of the Priority Goals were discussed. Anne agreed to revise and distribute the updated draft list of Trustees’ Goals for 2015.

**Refining/expanding policy for patrons with disabilities:** Anne thought that the Library might want to expand the brief statement on its website and spread the word out about what services were available for patrons with disabilities. Anne offered to work on the policy and get back to the Board.

## NEW BUSINESS

Due to the late hour, it was agreed that discussion of the items under new business would be postponed until the next Board meeting, including: Install window screens; Review/discuss long range plan; Review Operating Policies; Review Investments and Investment Policy; Review Manner of paying bills; and Review “Year-end” numbers.

**Install window screens:** Cory quickly shared that she was working with volunteer Peter Gebhardt to install the window screens.

**Investments:** Betsy S. did take a moment to report that the Global Water investment had been sold and the money transferred to the Abbott Memorial Library Fund on April 29<sup>th</sup>, so those assets were now consolidated per the Board’s decision during its last meeting. She also reported that John Moore had asked her some questions about the Library’s investments, like why we switched to Morgan Stanley. She shared the Library’s log-on information to its online, read-only Morgan Stanley investment reports with him and would put him in touch with Eric Werner, who had agreed to answer those sorts of questions. Speaking of which, she then reiterated that Eric would like to help the Library build an endowment and was willing to assist with an investment policy, if we all would do our homework. It was agreed that this should be part of the investment policy discussion during the next Board meeting, along with “proactive impact investing” versus “exclusionary investing.”

## OTHER BUSINESS

**Change of next meeting date:** Due to a scheduling conflict, changing the date of the regular meeting in June was proposed. It was agreed that the Board would meet on June 29<sup>th</sup> instead of June 15<sup>th</sup>. Betsy R. agreed to post change of date notices.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:55 PM.

Next Board of Trustee Meeting will take place at the Library at 7 PM on Monday, June 29, 2015.

May 19<sup>th</sup> Minutes respectfully submitted by Betsy Rhodes on May 24, 2015.

To: Trustees of the Abbott Memorial Library, Librarian's Report [May 19, 2015]

1. Circulation Statistics in April: 160 (last year: 212; in 2013: 303).

Listen Up Vermont checkouts, Jan. 1 – May 15, 2015 - 2012: 69, 58, 17, 20.

2. Patron Tally in April: 199 (last year: 147; in 2013: 171).

# new patrons in April: 1 family.

Computer use in April: 11 users/ 5.75 hours (last year: 6 users/ 2.75 hours).

WiFi use recorded in April: 3 users/ 3.5 hours.

Volunteer hours for April: 46 hours (desk coverage, library tasks, recycling, sidewalk, program).

3. Programs in April:

The after school Lego program drew in 17 boys and 1 adult for Lego and outdoor fun. (It was one of the first nice days of spring, and our yard was dry for sporting). Special thanks to Judi Greene for supplying LEGO, and to Anne Bower and Sue Heston for helping with snacks.

16 people attended the Stop Invasives plant program. Many thanks to Betsy Rhodes for sharing her expertise in a fun and informative format.

4. Upcoming Programs:

Summer Reading Program: I am still planning this. So far: summer reading logs, a craft day (superhero puppet making?), and a book to movie program.

Also this summer, the state will again offer a free day pass to Vermont state parks and historic sites for library patrons. Billings Farm also gives us a free pass. New this summer, I signed up for the Passport to Vermont Libraries Program, to encourage people to visit libraries around the state.

5. The plan for Charlie Bollinger's eagle scout project, to improve our two property borders, has been submitted to his troop leaders. He needs to complete it within a year, though he would like to do most of the work this summer. That may change transplanting times for some of the plants.

6. End of the fiscal year: The annual audiobook order is the big item that still needs to be finalized. Betsy Siebeck is updating me on other budget line items.

Cory